The Bread

By Roger E Bissell Jr

A traveler came upon a merchant's shop and noticed a loaf of bread unlike any he had ever seen.

After admiring it for some time, he said to the merchant, "This is the finest bread I have seen in all my travels. I would very much like to buy a loaf."

The merchant looked at him with surprise and replied, "My friend, we ask for no money here, nor any other form of payment."

The traveler was amazed.

"Then how may I receive this bread?" he asked eagerly.

"Simply ask, and it will be given to you," said the merchant. "Then go on your way and tell those you meet where they too may find this bread. For the baker who makes it has prepared it so well that those who partake of it will never truly hunger again."

The traveler pondered these words and then asked, "But if I choose not to eat this bread and instead visit another shop, one that many people recommend because its food brings pleasure and comfort, would I not be just as well off?"

A tear formed in the merchant's eye, yet his voice remained gentle.

"No, my friend. The food sold in those shops may satisfy for a time, but this bread is everlasting. It never fails to nourish those who receive it.

Those who eat this bread and then seek fulfillment elsewhere will find themselves hungry once more. But those who trust in the baker and continue to partake of his provision will discover a satisfaction unlike any other."

The merchant then lifted the loaf for all to see.

"We do not hide this bread, nor are we ashamed of it. It is offered freely to all who ask, and no one will be turned away.

The choice is yours. If you choose this bread, the baker himself will watch over you and help you through every trial. If you choose another path, you may go in peace, for the offer remains one of love and not compulsion.

May your hunger for truth guide your decision."

And so the traveler stood before the merchant, knowing that the choice before him was greater than bread alone.

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Freely Chosen Bread [Song 4:35]

[Verse 1]
I found a shop by the road
With a loaf I'd never seen
Golden crust in the window
Like a promise I could eat
I told the man, "That's the finest
I've seen in all my miles"
He just smiled at me softly
Like he knew me all the while

[Pre-Chorus]
He said, "Friend, there's no price here
Just ask and it is yours"
Then he pointed past the doorway
To a bread that opened doors

[Chorus]
Freely chosen
Freely chosen bread
It can hold your heart
When the rest runs dry again
Freely chosen
Freely chosen bread
Take it, live in it
You will not hunger again

[Verse 2]
I asked, "What if I wander
To the shops the crowds all praise?
Food that tastes like a promise
But fades before the day?"
A tear shone in his eyes then
But his voice stayed calm and kind
"Those meals can fill your hands, friend
Then leave you hollow inside"

[Pre-Chorus]
"But this loaf is forever
It won't fail the soul that comes
Those who trust the baker
Find a table full of sun"

[Chorus]
Freely chosen
Freely chosen bread
It can hold your heart
When the rest runs dry again
Freely chosen
Freely chosen bread
Take it, live in it
You will not hunger again

[Bridge]
The door stays open
The hands stay kind
No one's driven
No one's denied
If you say yes now
He'll walk with you
Through every valley
And bring you through

[Final Chorus]
Freely chosen
Freely chosen bread
It can hold your heart
When the rest runs dry again
Freely chosen
Freely chosen bread
Take it, live in it
You will not hunger again

Freely chosen
Freely chosen bread
The baker watches
Every step you tread

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Nothing Can Sever Us [Song 3:49]

[Verse 1]
I in myself is nothing, yet:
We are more than conquerors
through him who loved us.
For I am persuaded, that neither
death nor life,

[Pre-Chorus]
Nor angels nor rulers
Nor things present nor things to
come
You hold me close
You hold me close

[Chorus]
More than conquerors
More than conquerors
Nothing can sever us
From the Father's love

[Verse 2]
Nor powers, nor height nor depth,
Nor anything else in all creation,
Will be able to separate us
From the love of the Father in the
Son...

[Pre-Chorus]
Nor angels nor rulers
Nor things present nor things to
come
You hold me close
You hold me close

[Chorus]
More than conquerors
More than conquerors
Nothing can sever us
From the Father's love

[Bridge]
Nothing can tear us away
Nothing can break what You gave
Death has no final word
Life cannot undo Your grace

[Chorus]
More than conquerors
More than conquerors
Nothing can sever us
From the Father's love

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